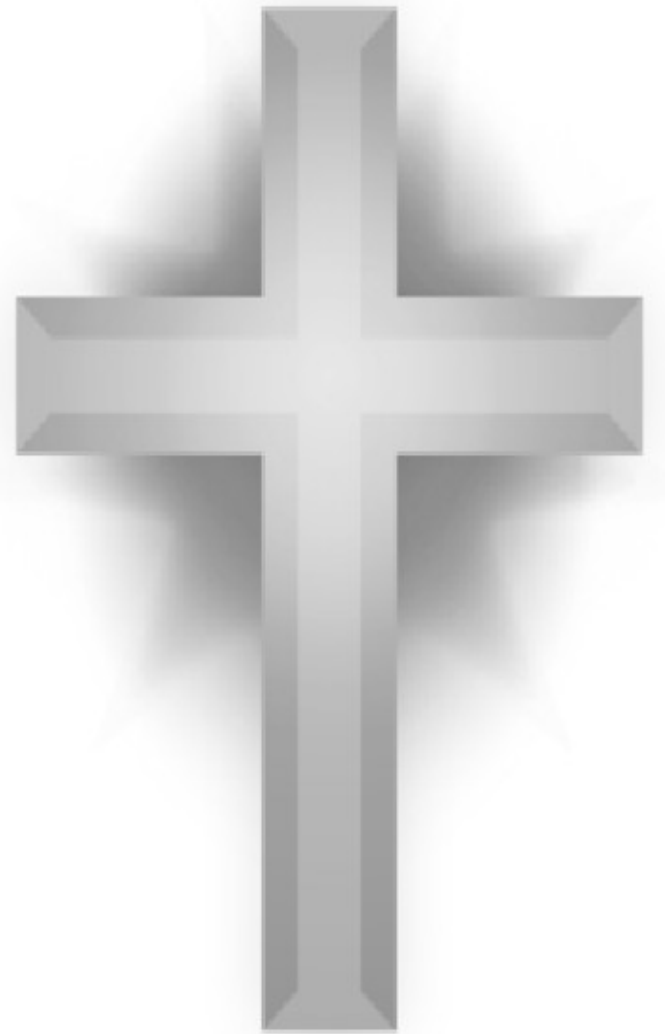


THE BEACON

THE PARISH MAGAZINE OF ALL SAINTS, SEDGLEY
& ST.ANDREW'S THE STRAITS



50p

JULY/AUGUST 2018

WHO's WHO

Team Rector	Revd Guy Hewlett	01902 295164
Team Vicar	Catherine Mitchell	01902 677897
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Pastoral Care	Tracey Bate	01902 680727
Worship Leader	Suzanne Bradley	01902 880055
Youth Leader/Children's Advocate	Laura Robinson	01902 678572
PCC Secretary	Chris Williams	01902 672880
Parish Office information baptisms, weddings, funerals and hall bookings.	Gail Griffiths	01902 540289
Parish Wardens	Keith Tomlinson	01902 673366
	John Anderson	01902 677666
Treasurer	John Anderson	01902 677666
Caretaker	Dave Bell	07933 204132
Server / Verger	Len Millard	01902 676339
Junior Church	Barbara Price	01902 676591
Brownies	Heather Churm	01902 674709
Ladies' Society	Geraldine Baker	01902 674608
Men's Society	Roger Berry	01902 881374
Mothers' Union	Liz Williams	01902 672880
Noah's Ark	Linda Edwards	01902 672556
Parent & Toddler Group		
Rainbows	Liz Naylor	07827 629648
Web Editor	Martin Jones	01902 884461
Youth Group	Laura Robinson	01902 678572
Bell Ringer	Keith Williams	01902 672585
Organist	Martin Platts	07941 173252

St Andrew's Who's Who

Warden	Canon Jan Humphries	
Treasurer	Gordon Betteley	01902 882777
DCC secretary	Rosemary Reed	01902 679007
Little Angels baby & toddler group	Canon Jan Humphries	
Singing Angels	Claire Cox	07812 010108

DIARY DATES FOR JULY/AUGUST 2018

A Summer Concert will take place on Saturday July 7th 7.30pm, at All Saints Church. Tickets are £8 per person which can be obtained from Gail, Liz, Tony or Kath (01902 540289).

Mothers Union

July 3rd - 2.30pm - Cream Tea - Church Hall

July 17th - 7.15pm - Communion followed by Walking in Mary Sumners
Footsteps - Margaret Penn - St Andrews

Aug 4th - 11.00am - Mary Sumner Day Service - Holy Trinity,
Amblcote

Ladies Society - July 2nd - Andy French - Billy Butlin

Baptisms

There was one baptism which took place at All Saints in June and one at St Andrews.

Funerals

June 12th - John Oakley - All Saints

June 22nd - Kenneth Meredith - All Saints

June 25th - Brian Downing - All Saints

June 26th - Trevor Miles - Gornal Wood

High Days & Holy Days for July/August

1 st July	Theobald – choosing God, not money
2 nd July	John Francis Regis– patron saint for relief workers
3 rd July	St Thomas the Apostle – confused and doubting
4 th July	Elizabeth of Portugal – compassion for prostitutes
6 th July	*NEW – Thomas More, Reformation martyr
7 th July	Boisil of Melrose – patron saint for ordinands
7 th July	Willibald – the first ever Anglo-Saxon travel writer
11 th July	Benedict – author of the famous Rule
14 th July	Camillus de Lellis – patron of the sick
15 th July	St Swithun (or Swithin) – saint for a rainy day
16 th July	St Helier – losing a loved one to violence
19 th July	St Macrina the Younger– a sister in a million
22 nd July	St Mary Magdalene – the woman with a past
22 nd July	St Mary Magdalene – patron of repentant sinners
22 nd July	St Mary Magdalene – What do we really know about her?
25 th July	St James the Apostle – apostle to Spain
25 th July	St James the Great
25 th July	St Christopher – patron saint of motorists
27 th July	The Seven Sleepers of Ephesus – naps are good for you!
30 th July	William Wilberforce, Olaudah Equiano and Thomas Clarkson
31 st July	St Joseph of Arimathea – the man who buried Jesus

THE BEACON

If you are interested in having the magazine delivered to your home on a regular basis please contact:

Keith Tomlinson : tel. 01902 673366.

The Beacon is published ten times a year and the cost for the year is £5. A larger typeface version of The Beacon can be provided on request.

Articles for the July magazine need to be sent to:

admin@allsaintssedgley.co.uk

by

Friday 17th August

and needs to be in Arial typeface, size 18.

WEBSITE: www.gornalandsedgley.org.uk

CHURCH OPENING



**Friday mornings from
10.30am to 12.30pm**

The church is open for quiet prayer & coffee and a chat.

VESTRY HOUR

If you know anyone who wishes to enquire about weddings or baptisms, please tell them that from 1st February, the Vestry Hour will only be held on the first and third Sundays in each month, from 12noon to 1.00pm.

Letter from the Archdeacon of Dudley

Nikki Groarke

Frequent reports of how lonely we are, across all ages and nations, have dominated the news for months. We live in lonely times. Increasing numbers of elderly people are living alone for longer. Many young people describe acute senses of loneliness. People are lonely in both in our cities and in rural areas, so much so that loneliness is now considered a public-health issue, with some commentators declaring that "the world is suffering from an epidemic of loneliness."

Recent studies assert that loneliness is hazardous to our health, disrupting sleep, increasing stress and inflammation, and weakening immune systems. It's also associated with cognitive decline, heart disease, and greater frailty later on in life. With a significant effect on mortality rates, loneliness is now considered a public health threat potentially more harmful than obesity and as bad as smoking. It's especially ironic that as we are globally connected to the worldwide village through social media, we are somehow more socially isolated than ever.

As church communities, we can and really should be part of the solution, reaching out to those who are alone and inviting them into the family of God. During the recent archdeacons visitations, I heard heart-warming stories of churches signing up as 'places of welcome', offering cake, coffee and chatter sessions, or knit and natter gatherings. Community is being built as people experience the loving welcome of church members not just on Sundays, but as our church buildings are used as places of connection and outreach during the week too.

Saint Paul says in his letter to the Corinthian church that 'whoever loves God is known by God'. (1 Corinthians 8:3) As his people, we can find security and comfort in the knowledge that we are never alone, God knows us and sees our comings and goings (Psalm 139), even if we feel alone and that no-one else cares. But God's promise to place the lonely in families is fulfilled when we, as his body on earth, reach out to those who are alone for whatever reason, loving and welcoming them, listening, and enabling them too, to experience being known by God, and cared for by his people.

Vicars Ponderings July 2018 – Being Called

A few years ago I attended a friend's ordination as Priest in Liverpool Cathedral. It was wonderful to see my friend ordained in such an amazing building (not as good as Durham of course!!) to celebrate with her and her family at the start of the next phase in her ministry journey.

At start of the ordination service in Liverpool the Dean of the cathedral welcomed the supporters, friends and relatives of those being ordained. At this point I was a little distracted because to me the Dean had an uncanny resemblance to the actor Patrick Stewart or for the Trekkies amongst you, Jean-Luc Picard the captain of SS Enterprise!!

In his welcome, the Dean, suggested that often when someone is ordained people will say that the person has been called “into the church”, they are “entering the church” or they have been called to do the work of God; but as the Dean at the cathedral helpfully reminded those present, that through baptism, the person being ordained has already entered the church, by virtue of our baptism we have all “entered the church”, we are all called as a royal priesthood, as the whole church in this place to be witnesses to God's love and to the work of his kingdom, this is not the sole calling of those ordained, this is ALL our callings.

The first two paragraphs of the Bishop's introduction to an ordination service also remind us that we are all, as the church, called by God;

God calls his people to follow Christ, and forms us into a royal priesthood, a holy nation, to declare the wonderful deeds of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvellous light.

The Church is the Body of Christ, the people of God and the dwelling-place of the Holy Spirit. In baptism the whole Church is summoned to witness to God's love and to work for the coming of his kingdom.

In his letters to the fledgling church, Paul often uses the analogy of the church being the Body of Christ.

12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. 13 For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body-Jews or Greeks, slaves or free-and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. (1 Cor 12:12-13)

This passage continues with more detailed descriptions of body parts and how they serve the body as a whole in particular ways, they all have a specific job or function to perform, and through these individual jobs and functions the body is made whole. It is within this body, when it is functioning as a whole body in unity, with the direction of the Holy Spirit, the body can achieve so much more.

Individuals from the body, may be called to do specific jobs, as Paul describes towards the end of chapter 12; 27 Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. 28 And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership and various kinds of tongues.

From within the body, individuals are called to take on a particular function, some people are called to lead our children's work, some people are called to lead services, some are called to clean the church building, some are called to oversee the finances, some are called to take on overseeing roles and some called to ordained ministry of a deacon, a priest, a bishop.

I wonder what God might be calling you to do to exercise in the body of Christ? Is there a ministry that God has given you the gifts to do? Is God calling you to take a fuller part in the ministry and mission of the church? To take a fuller part in the body of Christ?

Whatever this may be, the calling of all us all is to witness to God's love and His work in this place.

Blessings **Catherine**

MOTHERS' UNION

Joyce Bache gave a most interesting and inspiring talk at our afternoon meeting about 'Mothers' Union in France'. Joyce, a Mothers' Union member, and her husband had a holiday home in France which they enjoyed visiting. After recovering from illness her husband was advised to take early retirement and it was suggested they sold up and moved to France, which they duly did. Noticing Joyce's Mothers' Union badge and talking about the work of the organisation there grew an interest amongst the locals, in France, to start up a branch. Joyce told us of how the AFIA (Away From It All) project became highly successful, raising money through the raffling of beautiful crocheted blankets, and offers of holiday chalets for families to have a much needed break. Joyce's enthusiasm and commitment to the AFIA project in particular was very apparent. After many happy years in France Joyce and her husband decided to return to England. Their daughter, however, now lives in France so I am sure there will still be visits to see the family.

We had a wonderful afternoon of worship and fellowship last month at our Deanery Festival, at All Saints', which took as its theme 'Walking in Mary's Footsteps'. As members rose to sing 'Great is thy faithfulness' branch banners were processed, followed by symbolic offerings representing the Mothers' Union projects supported by our members. We were delighted to have Liz Green, our President, with us who gave an excellent address, and our chaplains, Revd Stephen Buckley and Revd Nick Kaleniuk. During the service Nick enrolled Jackie into the Mothers' Union and welcomed Guy to the branch. Liz presented Long Service Awards to members across the deanery which included Betty Ross for 40 years service and Gill Marsh and Alice Bradley for 20 years service. The collection totalled £205 which will go to the work of the Mothers' Union in the Diocese. I have had many complimentary comments about the service and wish to thank all who helped to make the afternoon such a joyous occasion.

We have been invited to the Mary Sumner Day Service on Saturday 4th August at 11am, at Holy Trinity, Amblecote. This will be followed by a light lunch. We are made very welcome and those members who have been in previous years enjoyed the service and fellowship over lunch. Please let me know if you will be going as I need to let Amblecote have some idea of numbers for catering. If any members need a lift please let me know.

Dates:

3 rd July	2.30pm	Cream Tea
17 th July	7.15pm	Communion followed by Walking in Mary Sumner's Footsteps, Margaret Penn

This meeting is at St Andrew's, The Straits

4 th Aug	11.00am	Mary Sumner Day Service at Holy Trinity, Amblecot
4 th Sept	2.30pm	Discover U, Steve
25 th Sept	7.30pm	From Cleaner to Canon, Canon Jan Humphries

Liz Williams

Cream Tea

Tuesday 3rd July, 2.30pm
at

All Saints' Church Hall

£6 – Proceeds to

**Mothers' Union Projects
& All Saints' and St Andrew's Churches**

(Tickets from Liz Williams)

What problems do ministers have to deal with these days?

Ever wonder what sort of pastoral problems people may be bringing to our minister?

Struggles with loneliness and mental illness are pretty sure to come near the top, according to a new survey.

The two issues have been found to be by far the commonest community issues facing parish priests in the C of E, according to a new survey by the Mission and Public Affairs Council and the Church Urban Fund. More than three quarters of clergy (76 per cent) reported that loneliness was a 'significant' problem in their community in 2017; eight per cent higher than in 2011. And concern for people's mental well-being increased from 40 per cent in 2011 to 60 per cent.

Homelessness is also taking its toll – it was seen as a significant problem by 14 per cent of clergy in 2011; in 2017 this had increased to 23 per cent.

Of course, the concerns are generally greater in more deprived parishes, where low income, poor education, unemployment, and family breakdown are also widespread.

Almost all incumbents reported that their churches were actively involved in helping people who were struggling with loneliness (94 per cent), family breakdown (86 per cent), and mental-health issues (83 per cent), in partnership with charities and other support groups.

Meanwhile, one in five benefices (19 per cent) run foodbanks, and more than 90 per cent of local churches now support foodbanks in some way.

Sponsors of the flowers in church:

- July 1 Bill & Barbara Baker
Brian Cox for Kathleen Cox
- July 8 VACANT
- July 15 For Floss & George Edwards
Pedestal for Jack Parton
- July 22 Jean & Des Round
- July 29 VACANT

In the first six months of the year, a small number of people have still not paid for the flowers for the week they chose to sponsor.

It would be most helpful if you could check the list on the board at the back of church, making a note of your chosen date, and making payment at least a week before hand.

I will give Gail a list so that the names can go in the magazine each month.

Stop! Hedgehog!

Hedgehog 'warning signs' are going up on our roads, at animal casualty black spots. The aim is to stop the drastic decline of their population – around 100,000 of them are killed on our roads every year, and it is feared that this level of mortality is unsustainable. The People's Trust for Endangered Species reports that hedgehog populations fell by a third between 2004 and 2017. Sadly, hedgehogs do not flee danger, but instead curl up into a tight ball – not much defence against a speeding car

Outer Hebrides to get its first mosque

The first mosque in the Outer Hebrides is due to open this summer, despite the objections of local church leaders. The plan faced fierce opposition from the local arm of the Free Church of Scotland. A derelict house is being converted into a mosque for the small Syrian community on the Isle of Lewis

The 'Other' Mary

Canon David Winter

A new film about her has stimulated fresh interest in one of the most elusive characters in the New Testament story, Mary Magdalene. I saw the film recently and personally found it disappointing. How do you make a rather boring film about such a fascinating person? Was she, as widely believed, a prostitute converted by Jesus? Probably not. Did she wash the feet of Jesus and dry them with her hair? Again, probably not. Was she the sister of Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead (as the film assumes)? Again, not proven. But amidst all the assumptions we actually know a lot about her, clearly recorded in the Gospels. On her saint's day (July 23rd) this year) it would be best to concentrate on them, rather than guesswork.

She is mentioned by name 14 times in the New Testament – more often than almost all the other disciples. Jesus 'delivered' her from seven demons (in first century terms, an awful mental or moral condition), and she then led a group of women disciples who travelled with Jesus and supported Him out of their own resources (Luke 8:1-3).

Most significantly of all, the unanimous testimony of the Gospels is that Mary was with the mother of Jesus at the cross, helped with His burial, and was the first human being to see and speak with the risen Christ (John 20:11-18). At the command of Jesus, she went and told the apostles, but they wouldn't believe her, because she was a woman. How times change!

As He was dying, Jesus made provision for His mother's future care. As soon as He was raised from death, He provided the 'other' Mary in His life with the assurance of His risen humanity – and made her the 'apostle to the apostles'.

70 years of the National Health Service

The National Health Service began operating 70 years ago, on 5th July 1948, when Sylvia Beckingham, 13, was admitted to hospital in Manchester to be treated for a liver condition.

It was the climax of a hugely ambitious plan by Labour Health Secretary Aneurin Bevan to bring good health care free to all at the point of delivery. The health service would be available to everyone and financed entirely from taxation, which meant that people paid into it according to their means.

Many Doctors and the BMA were very much against the NHS plans. This led to Aneurin Bevan's famous quote "I stuffed their mouths with gold".

It was based on a report by William Beveridge in 1942. The problem with it remains the huge increase in costs resulting from, among other things, advances in medical science, drugs and machinery. As Andy McSmith wrote in *The Independent* ten years ago: "It seems no amount of money will satisfy the infinite demand for better NHS care."

Within a few years prescription charges were introduced, as well as a charge for dental treatment. The current prescription charge is £8.80 per item, and dental charges are huge.

Saving the NHS seems to be a national preoccupation in the 21st century. The Christian Medical Fellowship is campaigning to emphasise the vital and radical need for Christians within it.

Not covered by insurance

A recent letter that appeared in *The Independent* newspaper: 'Following the recent major flooding, I find myself out of pocket, due to what I am informed is an "act of God." To avoid future financial embarrassment, please could you recommend an atheist insurance company?'

THE WAY I SEE IT – Holidays and Holy-days

Canon David Winter considers the stages of holidays....

‘Going to go somewhere nice for your holidays?’ is the standard hair-dresser’s opening gambit at this time of year. ‘Yes’, I reply, ‘I’m staying here’. They laugh politely, but clearly that’s not their idea of a holiday. In an average life holidays go through stages. Do you remember your late teens, and the thrill of independence – hitch-hiking with a friend across Germany, or scuba diving, or climbing mountains or camping (in the rain)? Then it’s couples, and memorable meals in little cafes in Italy or France. Next, perhaps, it’s children – warm sunshine, beaches, Spain or Cornwall. Then it’s retirement, and apart from grand-parent duties it’s cruises (‘cheaper than staying at home!’ they tell me, but I don’t believe it).

The final stage is where I am now, the holiday season as a time when the fever of life cools, when there’s room on the buses and trains, and blissful idleness punctuated by the occasional theatre outing or visit to Lord’s to snooze and watch county cricket.

Each phase has its appeal, and each can fulfil the fundamental principle of a holiday, which is hidden in the very word. It is, of course, a holy-day, because God commanded us to rest as well as work, and space and time to think, reflect and pray are precious holiday gifts.

At the different stages of life our holiday needs are different. What it should offer is a change from the normal, a new environment (even if it’s only the local park) and new experiences to treasure during the months of winter. God invented the Sabbath because we needed it. Enjoy your holy-days, wherever or whatever they are

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In praise of Emily Bronte

Novelist Emily Brontë, author of *Wuthering Heights*, was born 200 years ago, on 30th July, 1818, in a small country town in Yorkshire, moving shortly afterwards with her family to nearby Haworth, where she remained until her death at the age of 30.

Her mother and two oldest sisters died when she was still a child, and she became close to her youngest sister, Anne, with whom she created a fantasy world called Gondal.

Her father was a curate who emphasised personal commitment to Christ, and Emily was also influenced by her mother's sister, Elizabeth Branwell, who was a Wesleyan. *Wuthering Heights*, although unusual at the time for its passion and violence, has a great deal of Christian content.

It was first published in London in 1847, as the first two volumes of a three-volume set that included her sister Anne's *Agnes Grey*. The authors were given as Ellis and Acton Bell; Emily's real name did not appear until 1850.

Emily, who tended to be solitary and reclusive, never knew the extent of fame she achieved with her only novel, as she died a year after its publication. She also received praise for poetry she published earlier with her sisters under the names of Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell.

Untimely answered prayer

During the minister's sermon one Sunday, there was suddenly a loud whistle from one of the back pews. Jamie's mother was horrified. She glared him into silence and, after church, asked, 'Jamie, whatever made you do such a thing?'

Jamie explained: 'I've been asking God to teach me to whistle for ages, and suddenly, He did!'

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Read this before you take your dog to Europe

British pets are at risk of catching deadly diseases from foreign ticks when they are taken to the Continent. This is the warning from vets, who are reporting increasing numbers of foreign ticks who are being brought home from holidays to Spain, Cyprus, Romania and Bulgaria.

Last year 287,000 dogs travelled abroad, and one Big Tick study found that 76 per cent of them returned to the UK carrying foreign ticks with them. Encephalitis, which infects the brain and can cause death, is carried by the *Rhipicephalus sanguineus* – the brown dog tick or kennel tick

Prenez garde! Voila le French mosquito!

If you are going to France this summer, be sure to use repellent sprays. Aggressive tiger mosquitoes that can carry viruses such as Zika, dengue and chikungunya have already spread through half of France.

Tiger mosquitoes (originally from Asia) can be identified by their distinctive black-and-white striped body and legs. They are now prevalent through the south and centre of France, and even in some Parisian suburbs. The public health authority reports that 42 of France's 96 *departements* are affected and has warned people to be especially careful from May until November. They are urging residents to remove anything outdoors that could collect rainwater (where the bugs lay their eggs), and for holidaymakers to use anti-mosquito sprays and wear long-sleeved

Blessed

Notice on a suburban church notice board – “Remember, this Sunday is our annual blessing of the power mowers.

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**The magazine is distributed to 350 households in
the Gornal and Sedgley area**

Is the Church biased against northern accents?

Is it harder to become a vicar if you were brought up in the north of England? At least one CofE bishop thinks so.

The Bishop of Burnley, the Rt Revd Philip North, has said that selection boards favour well-spoken middle-class candidates over working-class candidates. And he said that officials working in the dioceses in the north of England thought that candidates with 'broad northern accents' were especially poorly received by selection advisers.

Bishop North suspects that the selection process is more 'for public schoolboys. It rewards eloquence, it rewards confidence, it's residential, it really favours your bright white candidate who knows how to handle themselves socially and know how to handle an interview.'

The Ven. Julian Hubbard, director of the ministry division of the C of E, said: 'Changes in the style, culture and format of the Bishops' Advisory Panel are being considered to ensure that all kinds of candidates ... are confident of a fair hearing.'

Three coffees are good for you

Three cups of coffee a day can do you good. At least, scientists at the University of San Paulo have found that people who drink three cups of coffee a day have fewer calcium deposits in their arteries, which means you have a better blood flow, and hence less heart disease.

On the other hand, the European Food Safety Agency advises that no more than *four* cups of coffee should be drunk in a day. Too much caffeine may increase heart problems and overall anxiety

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WWI TIMELINE - EVENTS OF 1918

July 1918

- 4th Battle of Le Hamel (Somme).
- 12th Haiti declares war on Germany.
- 13th Irkutsk (Siberia) occupied by Czecho-Slovak forces.
- 14th Kazan (East Russia) occupied by Czecho-Slovak forces.
- 15th Second Battle of the Maines (ends 7th August).
- 16th Ex-Tsar Nicholas 2nd, ex-Tsaritsa and family murdered at Ekaterinburg.
- 17th RMS Carpathia sunk by German U-boat in the Atlantic. This was the ship which had rescued survivors from RMS Titanic in 1912, and which rescued **Moina Michael** and hundreds of other stranded Americans in Naples at the outbreak of the war in 1914 (The Flanders Fields Red Poppy was first created as a symbol of Remembrance by American teacher Miss Moina Belle Michael (1869-1944))
- 19th Honduras, the last country to join the war, declares war on Germany United States cruiser 'San Diego' sunk by mine off Fire Island (Atlantic coast).
- 20th German Forces retreat across the Marne. Last attempt to attack the British Isles with aeroplanes - it was unsuccessful.
- 21st Chateau-Thierry retaken by Allied Forces.
- 23rd Battle of Soissons and of Ourcq (ends August 2nd)

26th Bulk of French Expeditionary Force troops join N. Russia Expeditionary Force at Murmansk.

28th Fere-en-Tardenois retaken by Allied Forces.

Major battles: Peace Offensive/Second Battle of the Marne.

This began on the 15 July and ended 5 August. The Germans still hoped to create a diversion that would allow a decisive attack in Flanders. Divisions drove forward, crossing the River Marne in several places, but were held. The Allies then launched a counter-attack, pushing the Germans back to their March starting positions. The German offensive in Flanders was finally cancelled.

There were 207 German divisions against 203 Allied divisions on the Western Front in July.

Reinforcements

Between March and August, 1918, the number of British reinforcements sent to the Western Front between March and August was 540,000

The Prancing Horse.

Francesco Baracca, Italy's highest-scoring fighter ace, was killed in June. His aircraft featured a prancing horse symbol painted on the side. Years later Francesco's mother suggested to a young racing driver called Enzo Ferrari that he adopt the symbol for his racing cars.

R.Moss

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On the perils of the Ladies' Guild annual outing...

The Rectory
St James the Least of All

My dear Nephew Darren

And so once again we start the annual round of parish treats. While the bell-ringers prefer public houses, and the choirboys want fast food outlets, the Ladies' Guild are centred on lavatories. The itinerary is unchangeable: Coach drive to coffee stop and lavatory. Coach drive to luncheon stop and lavatory. Coach drive to some arbitrary attraction – provided it has a tea shop and lavatory. Coach trip home with a lavatory (stop en route).



A sub-committee will have been hard at work for the previous six months deciding where to visit. The most disastrous course of action is to present the group with a choice; if two options are provided, they will attract almost equal numbers in favour, thus ensuring that half of the group will rejoice in saying throughout the day that the other option would have been preferable. When it comes to decision-making, Stalin had a lot going for him.

My predecessor in this parish left me a terrible legacy; he always accompanied the Guild on their day out, thus obliging me to do the same. I do, however, travel equipped with armaments. "The Times" crossword rules out any possibility of conversation for at least the first two hours. Three years ago, Mrs Phillips had the audacity to look over my shoulder and give me 12 across; she will not make that mistake again. A brief nap after these intellectual exertions, assuring those around me that I am meditating on the theme for next Sunday's sermon, ensures a morning almost free from having to comment on the weather, other members of the party, or why I so rarely drop in on the Pram Service.

The ideal destination is one where I have a clerical colleague, so while the ladies wander about, shop and analyse why I still wear the same suit I arrived in 30 years ago, we have an agreeable afternoon assassinating the characters of bishops and archdeacons and bemoaning the standards of a new generation of curates. After our different therapies, we all re-assemble at the coach for the return journey.

Naturally, there is the traditional wait for those who have forgotten where the coach park is. As far as I am concerned, a deficit of less than 10% should be entirely acceptable. I can think of several husbands who may be rather thankful that their wives may not be back as soon as they had feared.

Our ladies return, invigorated with the thought of all the bits of information about other members in the party that can be discreetly shared over the telephone, while I am exhausted from 12 hours of attempting to be polite. Meanwhile the sub-committee gets a date in the diary for planning next year's lavatorial sequence.

Your loving uncle,
Eustace

Say a prayer

Young Brian and his family sat down to Sunday dinner at his grandmother's house. When Brian received his plate, he started eating right away. 'Brian! Please wait until we say our prayer,' said his mother. 'I don't need to,' the boy replied.

'Of course, you do,' his mother insisted. 'We always pray before eating at home.'

'That's at our house,' Brian protested. 'This is grandma's house, and she can cook!'



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SERVICES FOR THE MONTH JULY/AUGUST 2018

1st July - All Saints - 8am - The Revd Catherine Mitchell
10.30am - The Revd Catherine Mitchell
6.30pm - Memorial Service - The Revd Catherine Mitchell and Canon Jan Humphries
St Andrews - 9.30am - Worship for All - Canon Jan Humphries
St Peters - 10.30am - Hon Canon Judith Oliver

8th July - All Saints - 8am - The Revd Guy Hewlett
10.30am - Worship for All - Canon Jan Humphries
6.30pm - Evensong - The Revd Catherine Mitchell
St Andrews - 9.30am - The Revd Guy Hewlett
St Peters - 10.30am - The Revd Catherine Mitchell

15th July - All Saints - 8am - The Revd Catherine Mitchell
10.30am - The Revd Guy Hewlett
6.30pm - Evensong - The Revd Guy Hewlett
St Andrews - 9.30am - Worship for All - Canon Jan Humphries
St Peters - 10.30am - The Revd Catherine Mitchell

22nd July - All Saints - 8am - The Revd Guy Hewlett
10.30am - The Revd Guy Hewlett
6.30pm - The Revd Catherine Mitchell
St Andrews - 9.30am - The Revd Catherine Mitchell
St Peters - 10.30am - Worship for All - Suzanne Bradley

29th July - All Saints - 8am - The Revd Guy Hewlett
10.30am - Joint Service - The Revd Guy Hewlett
6.30pm - Healing Service - The Revd Guy Hewlett

SERVICES FOR THE MONTH JULY/AUGUST 2018

5th August - All Saints - 8am - The Revd Catherine Mitchell
10.30am - The Revd Guy Hewlett
6.30pm - Evensong - The Revd Catherine Mitchell
St Andrews - 9.30am - Worship for All - Canon Jan Humphries
St Peters - 10.30am - The Revd Catherine Mitchell

12th August - All Saints - 8am - The Revd Guy Hewlett
10.30am - Canon Jan Humphries
6.30pm - Evensong - Canon Jan Humphries
St Andrews - 9.30am - The Revd Guy Hewlett
St Peters - 10.30am - The Revd Catherine Mitchell

19th August - All Saints - 8am - The Revd Catherine Mitchell
10.30am - The Revd Guy Hewlett
6.30pm - Evensong - The Revd Guy Hewlett
St Andrews - 9.30am - Worship for All - Suzanne Bradley
St Peters - 10.30am - The Revd Catherine Mitchell

26th August - All Saints - 8am - The Revd Guy Hewlett
10.30am - The Revd Guy Hewlett
6.30pm - Compline - The Revd Catherine Mitchell
9.30am - St Andrews - The Revd Catherine Mitchell
St Peters - 10.30am - Worship for All - Suzanne Bradley